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ABSTRACT

This report describes several ways for experienced teachers to function as a colleague and provide assistance to beginning teachers. The interaction strategies described are supported by illustrations from the data base of the Model Teacher Induction Project (MTIP), a study of first-year teachers and their support teachers. The three types of assistance that experienced teachers can provide include impromptu conversations, prearranged conferences which can have a pre-established or an emergent agenda, and classroom observations. The suggested procedure for the observation involving a beginning teacher and his/her support teacher was for the pair to determine the focus of the observation in a pre-observation conference, for the observer to take notes during the observation and organize those notes after the observation, and for the two teachers to discuss the observation as colleagues during a follow-up conference. Each of these types of assistance described in this report were utilized in the MTIP and were perceived as helpful by the beginning teachers involved. It is likely that the strategies illustrated here could contribute significantly to the repertoire of assistance techniques used by support teachers in a variety of induction programs. (Author/JD)

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Research and Development Center for Teacher Education

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PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: EXPERIENCED TEACHERS ASSISTING FIRST-YEAR TEACHERS

John J. Smith
and
Leslie Huling-Austin

R&D Report No. 7210

SP 026839

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Leslie Huling-Austin, Program Director

Model Teacher Induction Project

Strategies for Improving Teacher Education

Abstract

While much of what has been written about supervising student teachers and school supervision in general is relevant to experienced teachers who are assigned to assist first-year teachers, these support teachers in most induction programs are designated to function as colleagues rather than supervisors of the first-year teachers. This special role is different from that of a supervising teacher or a school supervisor, in that it requires that the support teacher assume an assistance role while at the same time maintaining a colleagial relationship with the beginning teacher. In the past, little specific information has been available to guide experienced teachers who are asked to fulfill support roles with their novice colleagues. This report describes several ways for experienced teachers to function as a colleague and provide assistance to beginning teachers. The interaction strategies described are supported by illustrations from the data base of the Model Teacher Induction Project (MTIP), a study of first-year teachers and their support teachers conducted by the Research and Development Center for Teacher Education during the 1984-85 school year. The three types of assistance that experienced teachers can provide that were described in this report include impromptu conversations, prearranged conferences which can have a pre-established or an emergent agenda, and classroom observations. The suggested procedure for the observation involving a beginning teacher and his/her support teacher was for the pair to determine the focus of the observation in a pre-observation conference, for the observer to take notes during the observation and organize those notes after the observation, and for the two teachers to discuss the observation as colleagues during a follow-up conference. Each of these types of assistance described in this report were utilized in the MTIP and were perceived as helpful by the beginning teachers involved. It is likely that the strategies illustrated here could contribute significantly to the repertoire of assistance techniques used by support teachers in a variety of induction programs.

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Professional Development: Experienced

Teachers Assisting First-Year Teachers

Section I: Introduction

In recent years interest has grown in assisting first-year teachers in the challenging transition from student to teacher. Increasing numbers of local school districts and teacher education institutions are implementing first year assistance programs. Several states have mandated such programs (Defino & Hoffman, 1984). Although the assistance programs vary greatly, most of them involve experienced teachers in a supportive role with first-year teachers (Huling-Austin, Barnes, & Smith, 1985).

Rationale and Purpose

There is already much written about supervising student teachers and school supervision in general (see Appendix A). Much of that literature is relevant to those who assist first-year teachers. However, because support teachers in most induction programs are colleagues rather than supervisors of the first-year teacher to whom they are assigned, their role is not identical to that of a supervising teacher or of a school supervisor. There is little specific literature for experienced teachers who are designated to support their novice colleagues. This document is a report for practitioners that illustrates several ways for experienced teachers to assume an assistance role while at the same time maintaining a collegial relationship with beginning teachers. The report includes illustrations from the data base of the Model Teacher Induction Project (MTIP), a research study of first-year teachers and their support teachers conducted by the Research and Development Center for Teacher Education during the 1984-85 school year.

Prior Research on Support Teachers

As noted earlier, most induction programs for beginning teachers involve experienced teachers in a supportive role with their novice colleagues. Experienced teachers filling this support role may be referred to as support teachers, mentor teachers, helping teachers, buddy teachers, or by other titles. In spite of the fact that these roles are common, few studies have been conducted that focus on teacher-teacher relationships and the phenomenon of the experienced teacher assisting the beginner. (Galvez-Hjornevik, in press).

Several researchers who have studied the teacher induction process have noted that without a formal structured relationship between the experienced teacher and the novice, a double barrier to assistance often occurs. This barrier can result from 1) the first-year teacher's reluctance to ask for assistance for fear that his/her competency will be questioned and 2) experienced teachers' reluctance to offer assistance for fear of appearing to interfere (Applegate et al., 1977; Newberry, 1977; Veenman, 1984).

A small amount of research has been conducted related to teachers and their mentors (Fagan & Walters, 1982; Gehrke & Kay, 1984; Krupp, 1984). However, this research focuses on the mentoring relationship throughout a professional career and provides little insight into the types of assistance necessary to help the novice in his/her first year(s). Along this same line, Judith Warren-Little (1981) identified collegiality among teachers as a factor that contributes strongly to an effective school, but does not address how experienced teachers and beginning teachers go about developing collegiality with one another. In short, little specific information regarding helpful ways of interacting with the beginning teacher is

available to guide experienced teachers who are asked to fulfill support roles.

Model Teacher Induction Project

In order to demonstrate and study induction practices suggested by research, the Research and Development Center for Teacher Education at The University of Texas at Austin undertook a pilot project in the 1984-85 academic year to design and implement a model for the induction of teachers, the Model Teacher Induction Project (MTIP). Participants in the project were first-year middle school teachers and experienced teachers serving in the role of "support teachers." The support teachers were selected by their school principal on the criteria of teaching success and willingness to help a new teacher. MTIP staff conducted workshops for first-year teachers and support teachers before school began and intervened in a variety of ways throughout the year to assist both the first-year teachers and their support teachers. The research component of the MTIP involved interviews with the participants, observations in their classrooms, recordings of conferences, journals, and other data collection. Further information on the project is given in Model Teacher Induction Project: Research Design for a Descriptive study by Barnes and Huling-Austin (1984), A Research-Based Staff Development Program for Beginning Teachers by Huling-Austin, Barnes, and Smith (1985), and First Days of School: A Good Beginning by Huling-Austin and Emmer, 1985.

Role of Support Teachers in the MTIP

The MTIP provided a source of information about the specific ways in which support teachers in that program provided assistance to the first-year teachers to whom they were assigned. In analyzing data from the study,

Galvez-Hjornevik & Smith (1985) identified three roles that support teachers fulfilled:

1) Facilitator--Oriented the new teacher to the school, made frequent contacts with the new teacher and acted as a go-between for the new teacher and the administration.

2) Supporter--Listened, gave positive reinforcement, gave feedback and planned curriculum cooperatively.

3) Expert--Answered questions and acted as a general resource person.

In addition, first-year teachers received support from MTIP staff members who conducted seminars, made classroom observations, and provided feedback. Support teachers in the MTIP were not provided with release time in which to engage in these activities, but certainly, support teachers could have assumed these types of duties had they had released time available.

In the MTIP much of the assistance first-year teachers received was through 1) impromptu conversations, 2) prearranged conferences, and 3) observations coupled with follow-up conferences. In this document, descriptions are provided of how support teacher and project staff assisted first-year teachers in these three specific contexts. The descriptions draw heavily on journal entries, transcriptions of conferences between support teachers and first-year teachers, and interviews with MTIP participants; names of the participants were changed to preserve anonymity. The purpose of sharing these descriptions is to give experienced teachers illustrations, not necessarily models, of ways to interact with first-year teachers. The examples selected for inclusion in this paper were chosen because they were both typical of the types of interactions that occurred frequently in the project and because they were helpful in illustrating specific types of

interaction. The figures in this report were constructed directly from the data base to support and illustrate the types of interactions being discussed. The interactions described here are of an assistance, not an assessment, nature. Experienced teachers involved in induction programs that have specifically prescribed assessment instruments will have roles that go beyond those described herein.

Section II: Impromptu Conversations

Much of the assistance that support teachers provided first-year teachers in the MTIP came through natural, informal contacts. MTIP researchers studied these interactions indirectly through the participants' journals entries and through interviews. MTIP data indicates that contacts between a support teacher and a first-year teacher tended to be more frequent when their classrooms were in close proximity and when the two teachers had one or more course preparations in common, i.e. the same subject, grade level, and track.

A Case Example

Bethanne, a beginning sixth-grade reading teacher, and her support teacher Karen, an experienced sixth-grade reading teacher, are a case in point. Their classrooms were contiguous and they had two course preparations in common; thus they had many opportunities to converse. Figure 1 itemizes the topics of the impromptu conversations they reported in their journals the first three months of the school year and indicates who initiated the conversation. Because not every conversation was recorded in their journals, the list represents a sample of topics discussed. Topics varied greatly, but were nearly evenly divided between those general to teaching and those relating specifically to teaching reading.

In the first week Karen repeatedly checked with the beginning teacher to find out how she felt teaching was going. A general question, e.g. "How did it go today?", sometimes led the first-year teacher to share specific satisfactions or concerns. This simple, impromptu interview technique, sometimes referred to as a "one-legged conference" in literature on assessing teachers' stages of concern (Hord, 1981; Huling-Austin & Emmer, 1985) can be a useful tool for support teachers in their role of listening

Figure 1

Topics of Impromptu Conversations
Between a First-Year Reading Teacher and Her Support Teacher
(Listed Chronologically)

Approximate Time	Who Initiated Conversation? ST	FYT	?	Topics of Conversation	*Nature of Topic
Week of preschool workshops	X			Content of the orientation session for new teachers	Gen
			X	Room arrangement	Gen
	X			Techniques for keeping records on text distribution	Gen
			X	Joint lesson planning	Sub
		X		Reading comprehension systems	Sub
		X		Location of materials	Sub
		X		Learning names and titles of other staff members	Gen
First week of classes	X			Filling out attendance forms	Gen
	X			Relating to the attendance clerk	Gen
	X			How 1st day went	Gen
	X			Plans for next day	Sub
		X		Getting students to answer questions in complete thoughts and sentences	Sub
		X		Problems teaching students to answer interpretive questions	Sub
	X			How 3rd day went	Gen
		X		Time needed to do given exercises	Sub
	X			Suggestions for handling student questions	Gen
	X			How 5th day went	Gen
		X		Ways to introduce a story	Sub
Next 12 weeks	X			How teaching was going overall	Gen
	X			What to say to parents in open house	Gen
	X			Open-house forms	Gen
		X		Teaching the skill of "drawing conclusions"	Sub
	X			Ground rules for behavior with new seating arrangements	Gen
			X	Grade records	Gen
		X		Discipline in support teacher's classroom	Gen
		X		Support teacher's impression of how new teacher was doing	Gen
	X			Grade calculations	Gen
			X	Plans to go to bookstore together to purchase books for free reading	Sub
		X		Frustration of secretarial staff loosing test master copy	Gen

*Sub = subject specific topic of conversation
Gen = General topic of conversation

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to and assessing the concerns of first-year teachers. Much information can be gathered and valuable communication can occur as the support teacher and first-year teacher meet "on the run" in the halls or when they stop off briefly in each other's classroom before or after school.

Karen's initiatives to begin conversation occasionally went beyond the general "How's it going?" to initiating conversations on specific topics her first-year teacher would not be likely to think about or initiate. As shown in Figure 1, Karen initiated conversations on topics such as relationships with the attendance clerk, open-house for parents, and record keeping, all of which facilitated Bethanne's orientation to the school.

Bethanne also initiated many conversations, often on teaching reading. These would typically begin with a specific question, e.g. helping students to deal with interpretive questions, ways to introduce a story, or teaching the skill of "drawing conclusions," (see Figure 1). Support teacher--first-year teacher relationships need to be such that the first-year teachers feel comfortable to ask questions, as Bethanne did, without fear of being judged incompetent.

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Section III: Prearranged Conferences

Although the first-year teachers in the MTIP received valuable assistance from their support teachers in impromptu conversations, such conferences tended to be short and hurried. Support teacher--first-year teacher pairs appeared to benefit from periodic opportunities, e.g. weekly or semiweekly, to sit down together for uninterrupted conferences. Sometimes they agreed on the agenda of the conference ahead of time (e.g. to discuss a forthcoming unit of study); at other times the agenda simply emerged as the two talked. Following are examples of conferences held by two first-year teacher--support teacher pairs in the MTIP project.

Example 1: A Conference with a Set Agenda

Because Sharon's support teacher, Margaret, taught in a separate temporary building, the two of them did not see each other frequently during the day. Although they occasionally met in the halls, at lunch or at faculty meetings, they had to make special arrangements to have extended dialogue. A format that worked for them was for Sharon to keep a list of questions to ask Margaret and then either call Margaret at home on the telephone or set a time to meet with her after school.

Figure 2 contains excerpts from an after school conference that occurred between Sharon and Margaret approximately 3 months into the school year. The right hand columns indicate the role each of the two teachers took at various points in the conference. Because the two had agreed ahead of time that Sharon would set the agenda for the conference with a list of questions, she was able to obtain information that concerned her most. The support teacher played the role of "expert," but did so without intruding because she was responding to the first-year teacher's questions and

Figure 2

Excerpts from a Conference with a Set Agenda

S = Sharon, a first year 6th and 7th grade language arts teacher

M = Margaret, her support teacher

		First Year Teacher's Role	Support Teacher's Role
S	[Sharon describes a problem she is having with students in one of her classes not being in their seats when the bell rings and then asks]...how do you get your kids all seated?	Asks for help (1)	
M	I almost have to stand at the door and I announce loudly about a minute to the bell that I count tardies and then I announce it again that I'll count them them tardy when the bell rings.		Shares an Approach
S	So you count tardies even if they're not in their seats?	Asks for Clarification	
M	If they're not seated. If you want to realign their thinking, go ahead and start announcing now--"OK we have a tardy problem." ...You might do this right around review time for semester exams and say "Starting [next semester] you are tardy when you are not seated at the bell." A good time to review the the rule is the first day of the new semester.	Suggests Change	
S	I know. That's when I'm planning...	Accepts Suggestion	
	...		
S	As far as detentions, do you use those D-hall slips where the parent has to sign them and all? I tried that some but...	Asks for help (2)	
M	Right.... Yes. What I do is this...You don't call the parent and say "Your son didn't	Asks for Clarification	Shares an approach
S	bring the D-hall slip?"		
M	Not the first time. No I don't call on that at all, unless it's something like... [Elaborates on how to handle detentions.]		Elaborates
S	What do you do with students who do not bring a pen, paper or book, off and on, particularly pens and books.	Asks for help (3)	
M	I do it the same way. I would say from now on "Here's the list [of rules]; you are to copy it off the board. This is my expectation beginning tomorrow. If you don't have it it's an automatic D-hall; after the second D-hall it's a parent call.		Shares an approach
S	One other thing. Is there a list somewhere of good spelling words that are already put together?...	Asks for help (4)	
M	Somewhere we have last years [state] list. You might use those.		Shares Materials
S	But if I could find them.		
M	...Where to look? Ask Jane Jackson, she had that last year.		
S	OK, she's doing spelling this year.		
M	Another place you might look would be...[Conversation evolves to planning meaningful spelling lessons and to spelling testing.]		

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concerns. In the course of the 30 minute conference, Sharon asked for help on four different concerns, [see Figure 2, First Year Teacher's Role, "asks for help (1), (2), (3), and (4)"]. Margaret was free to suggest changes and share her own approaches in a direct fashion because Sharon asked for that information. Sharon listened actively to the suggestions.

Conferences using the question and answer format, following the first-year teacher's list of questions, may be helpful for first-year teacher--support teacher pairs. Key factors in making this a useful strategy appear to be 1) self-discipline on the part of the first-year teacher to keep a cumulative list of questions, and 2) mutual agreement to meet regularly to discuss the questions.

Example 2: A Conference with an Emergent Agenda

Bethanne and her support teacher, Karen, had two daily preparations in common, so they had plenty to talk about. Even though they had many opportunities during each day to talk with each other in passing, they found it helpful to sit down together to confer without interruption. Frequently, the agenda of the conference was to plan a set of lessons together. The agenda of the conference excerpted in Figure 3 was not predetermined; it emerged in the course of the conference. The excerpt in Figure 3 came early in the conference after Bethanne expressed her appreciation to her support teacher for all the help she had been given thus far. In the excerpt Karen shared her concern that "sometimes maybe I'm overstepping my bounds." Karen's concern about "mixing in your [Bethanne's] business" continued throughout the year. Karen's role as a support teacher was ambiguous, by definition, a cross between a colleague and a supervisor; therefore, clarifying that role with the first-year teacher was worthy of discussion. Following this excerpt the two continued the conference by discussing

Figure 3

Excerpts from a Conference with an Emergent Agenda

B = Bethanne, a first year 6th grade reading teacher

K = Karen, her support teacher

		First Year Teacher's Role	Support Teacher's Role
K	Did you finish your thing [observation feedback conference] with [the administrative intern]? I know you've been worried about that.		Asks for information
B	No, I have not finished it yet.	Responds	
K	I know you thought I set you up for her to come look at you.		Shares concern
B	No I didn't.		
K	Oh, good!		
B	No, I didn't at all!		
K	I thought you were worried about that, because her form is different from everyone elses.		
B	Oh yeah, it was good.	Affirms	
K	I think it's an interesting form.		
B	No, I didn't think [you set me up]. I know that she was supposed to.		
K	Ok, good, I was worried that maybe ...		
B	She asked me something about that too. She said, did you know that [Margaret] had asked me to use this form, and I said, "No I thought that maybe you had to." She asked me that.		
K	Well we are worried about it. See, this is one thing that I find an unusual situation with teachers. Because usually teachers don't check up on each other, they usually don't make suggestions to other teacher's classes. They usually ...		
B	Do their own thing ...		
K	In their own little world. And I feel like sometimes I've mixed in your business.		Repeats concern
B	No no. I need help. Why did you feel that way?	Affirms; asks for clarification	
K	I just feel like sometimes that maybe I'm overstepping my bounds.		
B	No, you haven't at all, because I needed it. You haven't at all, because I needed all the advice that I had. I noticed that most teachers don't do that either. I mean, nobody bothers anybody else.	Affirms	
K	We're real sensitive in certain areas. My classroom is my own world. I do my own thing here, don't get in my way, don't tell me what I'm doing isn't right, don't ...		Repeats concern
B	But I think it would help.		

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1) their plans for an upcoming workday, 2) reading skills and stories to be taught in the following semester, 3) a unit they would teach on a novel, and 4) their mutually felt need for the upcoming vacation. Overall, the conference served to clarify the nature of the first-year teacher--support teacher relationship and to lay groundwork for future long-range planning.

The preceding two examples for first-year teacher--support teacher conferences illustrate the usefulness of prearranged conferences. Conference topics and formats will vary widely, but the general practice of taking time periodically to sit down for discussion will likely maximize the usefulness of first-year teacher--support teacher pairs.

Section IV: Observations and Follow-Up Conferences

The support teacher can be of significant assistance to the first-year teacher through impromptu and prearranged conferences. However, if the support teacher has opportunities to observe the first-year teacher in action, s/he may be of still greater assistance.

Time will limit the possibilities to observe; unless the support teacher has released time, scheduling observations may be difficult. However, securing a substitute teacher for several half days so the support teacher can observe and confer with the novice would be possible in many districts.

A General Format

In this section the observation and follow-up conference format used in the MTIP is described. The format includes a conference before the observation, the observation, and a follow-up conference. In the MTIP, observations were done by an MTIP staff rather than support teachers, because no release time was available for support teachers to fill this role. However, the format used is one that could be utilized by support teachers in assisting their less-experienced colleagues.

Conference before the Observation. In the MTIP conferences before the observation were typically short, e.g. 5-10 minutes, and the purpose was to determine the focus of the observation. The approach of offering to be an extra set of eyes and ears to gather information the first-year teacher wanted was utilized, in order to put the first-year teacher in charge of the observation and to lessen anxiety. Limiting the foci to two or three areas made both the observation and the follow-up conference manageable.

Some of the first-year teachers in the MTIP had difficulty reflecting on their teaching context and performance and were not able to immediately

suggest foci for the observation. In that case, to help the first-year teacher identify foci, the observer asked questions such as the following:

What are your plans (content, activities, etc.) for the lesson to be observed?

What do you intend for students to learn? How difficult will this likely be?

What methods will you use? How comfortable are you with those methods?

How do you predict students will respond? What difficulties do you foresee?

Discussion of these questions was helpful in prompting first-year teachers to identify what kind of information would be most helpful to them. When a teacher still could not identify a focus, the observer listed topics from which to choose, such as managing time, managing behavior, explaining content and assignments clearly, questioning skills, appropriateness and clarity of learning objectives, monitoring and giving feedback, or teacher-pupil interactions.

Observation. The MTIP observations were conducted for one class period. Depending upon the focus or foci, a shorter observation could sometimes be appropriate in other situations. Figure 4 shows the simple format used for writing rough notes while observing. Writing the focus of the observation at the top of the page kept the observer cognizant of the purpose, i.e. to gather information relevant to the stated concerns of the first-year teacher. Recorded time points were helpful for reconstructing the dynamic of the lesson during analysis and feedback activities. For applications in other settings, the amount of detail of the descriptive notes may vary, depending on the focus of the observation. Notes need not be polished, since their purpose is only to give the observer

Figure 4

Observer's Rough Notes

Teacher: Vicki Time: 12:05-12:55 Date: January 29

Subject: 6th grade science ("Basic Section")

Focus: Managing behavior in a lab setting

Time Points	Descriptive Notes (T = teacher; ss = students)
12:05	"Read"time
12:07	Begins oral quiz. Calls Don down for talking.
12:12	Asks to pass quiz forward one person.
	John not done--T asks, "Why didn't you say you weren't through?"
	T asks Sol and Jan to turn around.
	Teacher tells Ralph to desist talking to Henry.
12:13	Ss grade quizes as T goes over answers.
	T takes a book from Mark.
	Mark talks out.
	T--"Mark, be quiet."
	T--"Jan, sit down."
	T--"Al, turn around."
12:20	Ss pass papers in.
	T--"Joe, how do you get in your seat?"
12:22	Introduces laboratory activity--making models of lungs.
	T asks Jan to listen.
	Mark takes Jan's purse; tussle follows.
	T asks Don and Bill to participate.
	T sends Don out in hall; he protests.
12:28	T gives instruction; some don't listen; T warns they won't get lab done if they don't listen.
	T passes out materials for making models.
	T reminds them to share materials.
	Interaction with Mark
	T--"Mark, you aren't doing it."
	Mark--"I don't have no tape."
	T--"Well, just sitting ther like a bump on a log isn't going to..."
12:42	T reminds ss that have questions on the lab sheet to answer after they finish making the model.
12:51	T asks ss to put models aside so they can finish answering the questions.
	T reminds Sol, Jan, Mark, and Rlaph to put models down.
	While T works with Judy, she notices Jan still not working--
	T--"Jan, what are we supposed to be doing?"
	T sees several ss not working. "Lots will have homework."
12:55	Bell rings.

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enough information so as to recall critical elements when analyzing the lesson in preparation for the follow-up conference and during the conference itself. The rough notes are not intended for the first-year teacher, and they may only be comprehensible to the observer.

For a focus that relates to student participation, it can be helpful to draw a seating map (such as the one in Figure 5 from another MTIP observation) on which to record such information as who is on/off task, who asks questions, who misbehaves, who participates in discussion, or with whom the teacher works individually.

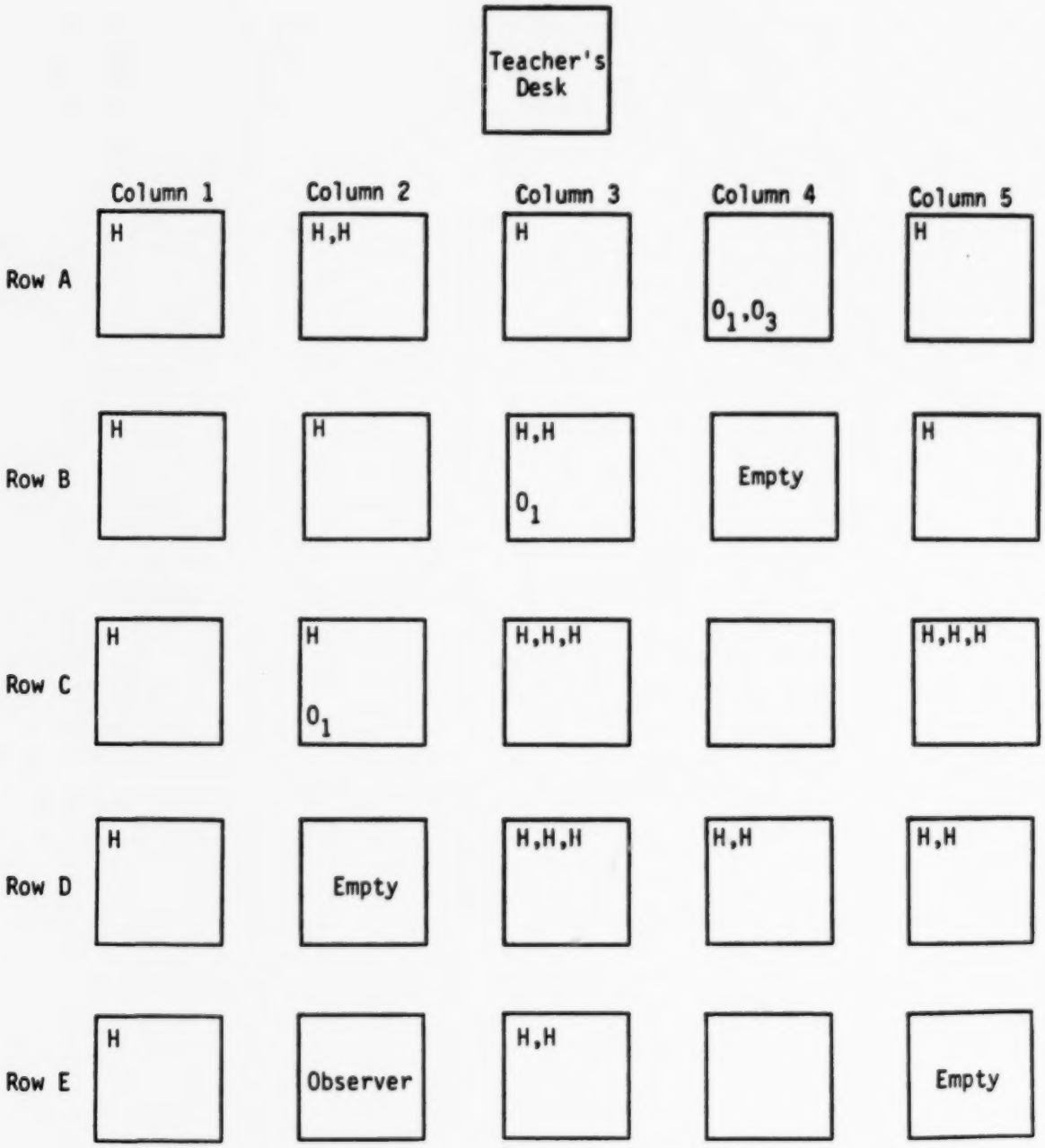
Preparation for Follow-Up Conference. In the MTIP the follow-up conference was held on the same day as the observation so that pertinent details would not be forgotten. This is generally an advisable practice because the observer cannot write down all the significant details in the lesson. It was noted, however, that conferring immediately after the observation prevented the observer and the new teacher from having enough time to collect thoughts. Therefore, when schedules permitted, the observer used an hour in preparation for the conference to review notes and organize observations and reflections around the foci the new teacher suggested. The end product of this time of analyzing the lesson was a tentative, skeletal outline of items to discuss in the conference. This outline was valuable not only to the observer in structuring the conference, but to the observed teacher in reflecting further following the conference.

An example of an observer's organized notes is shown in Figure 6. In this case, the observer visited Leslie Beck, a first-year seventh-grade reading teacher who requested feedback concerning student involvement. Notice that the comments include several levels of analysis:

Figure 5

Observation Format: Seating Map

(Sample from a 7th Grade English Class)



H = students that the teacher helped with seatwork

O = students off task at given times
(O_1 = 10:45; O_2 = 10:55; O_3 = 11:05; O_4 = 11:15; O_5 = 10:25)

Figure 6

Observer's Organized Notes for
Structuring Feedback to Teacher

Teacher: Leslie Beck — Observer:

Class: 3rd period, 7th grade reading, January 74

Focus: Student Involvement

	Type of Feedback
I. Involvement during silent reading time (10:10-10:27 a.m.)	
A. In general students (ss) started reading promptly and continued reading until time was up. Quite good overall.	Specific and general affirmations
B. Exceptions Stacy--drawing something in notebook on lap David & Brian--whispering	Specific problem
C. T monitored from front of room. When T saw David & Brian off task she moved immediately to get them back on task--important.	Specific affirmation
II. Involvement when checking exercises (10:27-10:53)	
A. Ss stayed on the task of checking papers the whole time.	Specific affirmation
B. Student participation when checking papers (See attached chart)	Description
1. 20 of 23 answered at least once (3 didn't talk at all)	
2. 6 answered just once	
3. 6 (5 boys and 1 girl) answered just once	
4. T called on volunteers 63 times--nonvolunteers 2 or 3 times	
5. Boys recited much more often than girls	
6. All questions students asked had to do with whether or not an answer was correct rather than on understanding	
7. T usually alert when students held up hand to ask a question. (Exception--T missed Tracy 2-3 times)	
C. Involvement with skills and concepts	
Although students kept on the procedural task of checking and grading the exercises they may not have been mentally involved. For example:	Hunch
1. In checking the vocabulary, what more might you do to help ss learn the meanings of the words as they are scoring the answers?	Probing question
2. In checking the worksheet on outlines, what more might you do to get them to be able to organize the contents of a paragraph into outline form?	Probing question
III. Involvement in seatwork (10:53-11:05)	
A. Good to write assignment on board, as you did.	Specific affirmation
1. May help to have written there ahead of time--keeps things moving faster and tends to keep ss from talking.	Suggestion for change
B. Good that you told them you expected them to get at least ½ of the exercises done in the 11 minutes available--you communicated your your expectations clearly.	Specific affirmation
C. Almost all stayed on task until the last minute. Good.	Specific affirmation
(Exceptions were David & Adam. You were alert to fact that David had moved to a seat by David and were right in not letting him talk you into staying there.)	
IV. Overall students stayed on task and participated.	General affirmation
Some things to try that may increase participation and mental involvement even more are:	Suggestions for change
A. Call on non-volunteers, as well as volunteers to even out participation	
B. Develop a simple system of keeping track of who you call on, so you can further even out the participation	
C. Move around the room, rather than staying seated, to keep students on their toes	
D. When grading papers, plan ways to capture students' minds	
Management was excellent today.	General affirmation

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1) Specific information, e.g. IIB1--"20 of 23 answered at least once."

2) Generalizations, e.g. IIB6--"Boys recited much more often than girls."

3) Hunches, e.g. IIC--"Although students kept on the procedural task...they may not have been mentally involved."

The comments are also a mixture of description and evaluation. Comment IA begins with a description ("In general ss started reading promptly...") and ends with evaluation ("Quite good overall."). Some comments are questions that invite the novice to consider alternative approaches, e.g. IIC1, "In checking vocabulary, what more might you do to...?". The comments end in Section IV with a series of suggestions for the new teacher to consider. Overall, the comments run the gamut of the directive/nondirective continuum. Depending on the nature of a support teacher/new teacher relationship, more or fewer direct comments may be appropriate.

The MTIP observer made a point of telling beginning teachers what they were doing well, both to build their identity as a successful teacher and to reinforce effective teaching behaviors. Figure 7 contains excerpts of comments the observer wrote after an observation of a first-year eighth-grade science teacher, in preparation for the follow-up conference. Note especially the listing of specific behaviors that the observer believed contributed to classroom order. The observer did offer suggestions for change, but did so in conditional, non-judgemental terms (e.g. Section IB4, "You may want to plan ways to . . .") and by building on the new teacher's ideas (e.g. Section IIC ". . . You indicated you want to . . . I encourage you to do that."). Overall, affirmations clearly outnumbered the "sandwiched in" suggestions for change.

Figure 7

Excerpts of Observer's Organized Notes

for Structuring Feedback to Teacher

Teacher: Jennifer Jones

Class: 4th period, 8th grade science, March 8

Foci: Discipline and Presentation of New Material

	Type of Feedback
I. Overall students stayed on task the great majority of the time. When they were off task they were only mildly disruptive on 3-4 occasions.	General affirmation
A. What you did that likely contributed to ss staying on task (and avoided disruptive behavior)	
1. Started class promptly by putting questions (to answer in writing) on transparency.	Specific affirmation
2. Because you had the transparency done ahead of time you could spend your energies looking around class to see that all ss got started on questions.	Specific affirmation
3. You circulated around the room to see here the ss were in answering questions. Your movement around the room & your looking at their papers likely added to ss feeling accountable to do assigned work.	Specific affirmation
4. You gave ss 3 min. & 1 min. time warnings to cue them when to finish questions 1-9 & 10-14.	Specific affirmation
5. You stuck to the time limits set. This kept them accountable & kept up momentum.	Specific affirmation
6. You dealt with ss managerial questions quickly, e.g. when Greta asked about test tomorrow you answered quickly & moved on. You didn't let them slow you down for managerial questions.--Good.	Specific affirmation
7. Your procedure for collecting papers was efficient--done in 30 seconds. Again this kept momentum up & left little time for disruptive behavior to emerge.	Specific affirmation
B. What you did to deal with disruptive and/or off task behavior	
You may want to plan ways to get repeat offenders to take responsibility for changing, so you don't have to continue to call them down. Which students do you always have to call down for shouting out answers, for talking to neighbors, for not starting written work?	Suggestion for change
II. Presentation of new material	
In our conversation you indicated you want to spend more time engaging the ss in discussing questions that go beyond recall. I encourage you to do that. We discussed the need to establish rules and procedures for more open-ended discussions so that ss listen to each other and take their turns talking, without blurting out.	Specific affirmation
III. Overall, you conducted the class smoothly, were alert to individual students and displayed interest in the subject matter. I thought it was a good lesson.	General affirmation

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Follow-Up Conference. For the follow-up conference after the observation, the MTIP observer used a format that combined both directive and nondirective styles. This format seemed both workable and appropriate for the first-year teachers in the MTIP project and included the following steps:

1) The first-year teacher began by giving her/his impressions of the lesson. The observer took a nondirective role by listening, asking clarifying questions, and affirming the first-year teacher.
2) The observer then presented her/his observations and reflections, following either a skeletal outline or more detailed written comments made in preparation for the conference.
3) The conference typically ended with a short discussion of the next steps the first-year teacher may want to take toward increasing teaching effectiveness.

These conferences were easily initiated, because the first-year teacher knew ahead of time that s/he would begin it with her/his own impressions of how the lesson went. Figure 8 contains excerpts of the beginnings of two such conferences.

This nondirect approach in the first part of the conferences allowed the new teacher to share perceptions and concerns. While concerns were not always related directly to the topics around which s/he requested the observer focus the observations, the concerns mentioned provided insight into ways the observer could be of further assistance to the first-year teacher.

After 5-15 minutes of listening actively to the first-year teacher, the observer then shared his impressions of the class by reviewing his written comments with the first-year teacher, elaborating when necessary. This

Figure 8

Initiating Follow-Up Conferences: Two Examples

Example 1: Jennifer Jones, a first year 8th grade science teacher

(J = Jennifer, Ob = Observer)

	First Year Teacher's Role	Observer's Role
Ob In a conference such as this I prefer for you to give me your impression of how it [the observed lesson] went. And then I'll share some of my notes. At the end we can decide what next.		Sets agenda
J O.K. Well...overall...I think it was a little long, what I would have them write. I usually don't have them write for that long....	Shares	Listens concern
Ob Would you routinely start out with them writing something?		Asks clarifying question
J Yes...It was a little different today. They were quiet when they were writing; but I didn't have one of my main guys who just really doesn't do anything.	Shares concern	Listens
Ob And he's been transferred?		Asks clarifying question
J Yes. (J goes on to describe common inappropriate behaviors of several other students in the class.)	Shares concern	

* *

Example 2: Leslie Black, a first year 7th & 8th grade reading teacher

(L = Leslie, Ob = Observer)

	First Year Teacher's Role	Observer's Role
Ob I thought one way we could conduct this conference would be for you to tell me how the class went. Then I'd show you some of the notes I took. We could just talk after that.		Sets agenda
L Their behavior was real good today.... They responded real well. They're not the best at checking papers...so that was the major confusion.... They were good today, they really were.	Shares impressions	Listens
Ob Yes. I thought too they were generally quiet and on task.		Affirms
L (Goes on to describe typic behavior problems in the class.)	Shares concern	Listens

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segment of the conference was more direct than the first part; the observer talked most. However, the direction came more from the first-year teacher than the observer, because it was the first-year teacher who suggested the foci of the observation. Figure 9 contains an excerpt from a directive segment of a follow-up conference with Sharon Kane, a first-year sixth- and seventh-grade language arts teacher. The observer alternated affirmations with suggestions. Affirmation is important because many first-year teachers are unsure of themselves. Specific affirmation, such as "...it seems helpful to remind them before the bell rings that they're to be in their seats...", can be helpful to first-year teachers, because they frequently cannot analyze what they are already doing well, and this encouragement may also make them more open to suggestions for change.

In the conference on which Figure 9 is based, suggestions to the first-year teacher were worded so that the teacher would not feel obligated to accept them. Conditional wording, such as "And it might be at some point..." or "But I'm not sure you need to do that in this class now," helped communicate that the choice was the first-year teacher's. The observer also intentionally used a tone of voice and mannerisms that communicated the attitude that it was the first-year teacher's, not the observer's, responsibility to make decisions about her/his teaching. The concept of respecting the first-year teacher's "space" as a colleague is important when conferring after an observation.

A Complete Case Example

Illustrations of the conference strategies used thus far in this section were drawn from several MTIP cases to illustrate the various parts of the general format. Following is a detailed account of how the MTIP observer applied this approach in assisting Bethanne Ball, the same

Figure 9

Offering Feedback: Excerpts from a Sample Follow-Up Conference

S = Sharon Kane, a first year 6th and 7th grade language arts teacher

(S = Sharon, Ob = Observer)	First Year Teacher's Role	Observer's Role
Ob Let me show you some of the notes I took. I focused on the two things you suggested--Classroom management, particularly the "staying on task" part of it and then on clarity. I think you mentioned both of those.		Focuses Agenda
S Right.	Confirms	
Ob On classroom management, it seems to be helpful to remind them before the bell rings that they're to be in their seats.... Some classes you can probably move to getting them to wean away from you having to remind them. This class, though, you may need to keep that up. But they did, in fact, get to their seats. But if you're really working toward self-responsibility, the n degree would be that they would do that without you reminding. At this point, I don't think it's bad that you have to tell them.	Listens	Affirms
S We're working on that, kind of a new rule, you're tardy unless you're in your seat. It started this semester.	Clarifies	
Ob I think that's good to work on. And it might be at some point then, particularly the ones that you see every day, that you're pretty sure you need to remind them or they wouldn't do it. You might just make sort of silent pacts with them, you know, just individually. You know, "I want you to be sure to be in your seat today, and I don't want to have to tell you today," or something like that.	Listens	Affirms Suggests a next step
S Okay. To where I don't have to announce it.		
Ob Yes. But I'm not sure you need to do that in this class now. I think you may want to keep doing this for a little bit. They were very quiet. They were all seated and I thought that was great. And after the brief, oh thirty seconds on the journal entry, they got right to it and what was really good was they kept up their attention when the disruption of the three coming in [late], so that's a good sign, I think. Very good sign.		Affirms
S It's a common thing in this class to have people come in late.	Clarifies	
Ob But anyway, the momentum of their working carried them through that, so I think that's a good sign. They seemed to be listening when you explained today's writing assignment.		Affirms

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first-year teacher used as a case in point in Section II. This complete case example is offered as a point of reference for experienced teachers who are designated to assist first-year teachers but who have not received training in observing in classrooms or in providing feedback.

Conference before the Observation. In this case the conference was a brief telephone conversation in which the observer asked Bethanne the foci around which she wanted the observation and feedback to be centered. She suggested very general foci, namely "managing students" and "presenting material." She seemed eager to receive feedback.

Observation. On the day of the observation the observer arrived a few minutes before class began. Bethanne ushered him to a desk at the back of the room where he would least likely distract students when taking notes. The observer asked if she had any changes in the foci she suggested two days earlier ("managing students" and "presenting material"); she offered none. The observer confirmed that the two of them would confer during her planning period, an hour after this class was over, and suggested that she begin that conference by sharing her perceptions of the lesson and that he would follow by sharing his written comments. Bethanne agreed. Soon students entered the classroom and the observer began recording the observations shown in Figure 10.

In recording descriptive notes, the recorder selected events that related only to the foci; otherwise the recorder would have been so absorbed in writing that his powers of observation would have diminished. Short direct quotes were recorded when exact wording might facilitate subsequent analysis or feedback to the teacher. For example, at time point 12:23 in Figure 10 the teacher says, "Close SQUIRT books. Get your spirals.", and the class complies. Occasional evaluative comments, such as "Good momentum"

Figure 10

Observer's Rough Notes

Teacher: Bethanne Ball Time: 12:05-12:55 Date: January 23

Subject: 6th grade reading

Foci: 1) managing students
2) presenting material

Time Points	Descriptive Notes
12:04	T--"Be in seats by bell & be reading." 6 weren't--4 of these getting books from rack.
12:05	Bell. Names written on board for not being on task Names: Joel Ryan
12:06	T at desk looking out to see who's reading and checking attendance.
12:08	All reading, including t; t occasionally eyes class.
12:18	Uninterrupted silent reading; all have continued on task and keep it up when a student comes in late.
12:23	T--"Close 'SQUIRT' books. Get your spirals." T puts o.p. in place while ss do what they're told quietly.
12:24	T asks ss to put #4 at top of page Opening--Ex 1 If you saw an ad for "The Greenery," what would you think? Ex 2 - - - Ex 3 - - - T--"You drew a conclusion." T now goes to notes on transparency, uncovering 1 point at a time (Overhead) I. Drawing conclusion A. (asks ss to copy point A. All do, except Bob may not be getting it all). B. C. T re-reads Part I Practice. T--"OK I'm going to read a paragraph. You listen. T reads Ex 1. T asks --can statement be concluded? Reads Ex 2 & 3 Shows transparency of a paragraph & questions. T--Do #1 on your paper--write your answer. How many put A, B, C? "A!" #2 asks for A B or C. "C" Good! Look at it. Does same for questions 3, 4, & 5.
12:29	Passes out sheet--"Don't write on this. Number 1-5 on papers"--Quick change; no disruption. Good momentum
12:29	Gets right on to #1 #2 Read--answer (Scott--"Turn around; put work on your desk.")
12:42	#3 read "Now all go back & look at the paragraph. This is kind of tricky!" T walks around T "Wadia get?"--"A!" #4 Christine reads. Gives time to work.
12:44	#5 Sherry read aloud. "What has she lost?" (Pause)
12:46	OK. How do you draw a conclusion? Chris answers, T repeats. T expands. (Closure)
12:47	Homework "Get out paper." Tells quickly how they're going to do homework. Says they have to bring it back. pp. 66-67 Says what she expects them to do in 8 min. "Look at p. 67. I want to go over it with you." Goes over it.
12:55	Bell rings.

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at 12:29, were recorded to facilitate recall of impressions after the class was over; excessive evaluation would detract from the central purpose of recording relevant information that the first-year teacher might not pick up without the observer's assistance.

Preparation for Follow-Up Conference. The observer spent the next fifty minutes sorting out and organizing the information around the two foci, as shown in Figure 11--Observer's Organized Comments. The comments would serve to structure a part of the follow-up conference; they were a mix of describing, generalizing, and evaluating. Section I was organized around five generalizations ("A. Prompt start," "B. Teacher monitors seatwork," "C. Ss stayed on task...," "D. Smooth transitions...," and "E. T alert to inappropriate behaviors...") and one evaluative comment ("F. Management excellent overall."). Most of the generalizations were substantiated with specific information as Section ID on transitions illustrates; each transition was listed and subsumed with specific teacher actions. The purpose of listing specific actions was to help Bethanne reflect in detail on what she was doing well. General evaluations, unsubstantiated with specifics, such as generalization D, "Smooth transitions...", might have built up Bethanne's confidence (a valid goal), but would not have provided her with any information that would reinforce her ability to make smooth transitions.

With the exception of Subsection IID, "Closure," where the observer stated in positive terms a suggestion for involving more students, section II of Figure 11 also was primarily a documentation of what Bethanne was doing well. Not all analyses can be this positive and have integrity. Support teachers can be supportive and at the same time call first-year teachers' attention to needed improvements. In the case of Bethanne, the

Figure 11

Observer's Organized Notes for
Structuring Feedback to Teacher

Teacher: Bethanne Ball

Class: 5th period, 6th grade reading, January 23

	Type of Feedback
I. Management	
A. Prompt start	Specific affirmation
1. T reminds students of expectation to be in seat & reading with bell.	Description
2. T writes name on board for those 2 who don't immediately comply (without saying anything).	Description
3. Within less than minute all others on task; two offenders get on task when their names go up.	Description
B. Teacher monitors seatwork.	Description
1. During "Squirt" T reads also but keeps a "roving eye."	Description
2. When students did writing T circulated 2-3 times, looking to see who was finished.	Description
C. Ss stayed on task almost all the time, from beginning to end of period.	Specific affirmation
D. Smooth transitions from one activity to another.	Specific affirmation
1. From "Squirt" to working in spirals & listening to explanation of "Drawing Conclusions"	
a. T tells ss immediately & clearly what they're to do--"get spirals."	Description
b. T has transparency all ready; moves OP into place, but watches ss as she does it. Ss quiet.	Description
c. Within 1 min. all have spiral out & T says to turn to a clean sheet & number at top. They do.	Description
2. From explanation to work sheet	
a. T has papers ready to pass out.	Description
b. T says immediately what to do on paper ("Number 1 to 5")	Description
c. T begins on item #1 within 30 secs. Quick! Good!	Specific affirmation
3. From worksheet to assignment	
a. Tells them materials needed--"Get out paper."	Description
b. T quickly explains how they're going to do homework while she passes out workbooks.	Description
c. Tells them to turn to page #67--goes over #1 with ss.	Description
d. Students at work within 1 min.	Description
e. Ss stay working until bell rings.	Description
E. T alert to inappropriate behaviors--called down 2 students; each time was prompt, firm, and didn't loose momentum of lesson.	Specific affirmation
F. Management excellent overall.	General affirmation
II. Presenting subject matter [Drawing conclusions]	
A. Opening exercise	
1. Gives information and asks ss to draw conclusions from intro. Does 3 examples. Tells them what they just did--"Drawing conclusions." (Well prepared examples!)	Description Specific affirmation
B. Presents beginning of outline on transparency.	
1. Uncovers points IA, IB, & IC one at a time.	Description
2. Asks students to copy each point.	Description
3. When done copying T re-reads points A B & C.	Description
C. Practices drawing conclusions with 3 Exercises.	Description
1. Oral--"You listen while I read." Reads statement--asks for conclusion. Does two more.	Description
2. Written--from a transparency; students write answers in notebooks ("Number 1-5"). Does all five, one at a time in this manner.	Description
a. Write answer (a b c).	
b. Polls ss ("Raise hands") for answers a, b, c.	
c. Gives answer; praises.	
3. Written--from hand-out	Description
D. Closure--After practicing "drawing conclusions" you had a 30 second closure by asking a student, Chris--"How do you draw a conclusion?" You accepted her answer and expanded it briefly. You may find it helpful to involve still more students in the closure and go back to the content (in this case the 3 point outline) to help all ss tie their practice & tomorrow's assignment back into that content.	Description Suggestion for change
E. An appropriately quick pace throughout. You kept momentum going from beginning to end.	General affirmation

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foci she suggested were aspects of teaching in which she was doing well (at least in this class period); however, prior conversations indicated she was not sure she was doing well and needed reassurance.

The observer's organized comments in this case were both direct and positive. Nondirective comments could also be appropriate. Like most beginning teachers, Bethanne could have benefited from assistance in learning how to analyze her own teaching, and a more nondirective approach to preparing for the follow-up conference might have served both the purposes of facilitating the beginning teacher's self-analysis and giving her feedback on the lesson. Instead of listing and substantiating generalizations, a support teacher could prepare for the conference by forming questions so that the novice could take a more active role in the analysis. For example, instead of writing the directive comment--"ID Smooth transitions from one activity to another," the observer could write questions to structure discussion on transitions, e.g. "What did you do to make the transition smooth"?

Follow-Up Conference. Although the observer prepared detailed written comments in the period between the observation and the follow-up conference, he did not begin the conference with those comments. Instead, he began in a nondirective fashion, asking Bethanne if she would give her perceptions of the lesson. Figure 12 contains excerpts of this section of the conference. Bethanne talked most; the observer mainly listened, affirmed and asked clarifying questions. Bethanne's reflections on the lesson were limited mainly to criteria outside her control, such as the length of the period and the broken copier; and to concrete matters, such as the students looking at Michael Jackson posters. In the 10 minute nondirective segment of the conference, she did not analyze the lesson in depth.

Figure 12

Listening to the Teacher's Perception of a Lesson:
Excerpts from a Follow-Up Conference

B = Bethanne, a first year 6th grade reading teacher

Ob = Observer	Bethanne's Role	Observer's Role
Ob Would you be willing to begin by giving your perceptions of the lesson? Then I'll share the comments I wrote on classroom management and presenting new materials, as you suggested.		Sets agenda
B First of all, let me talk about the class. It's a longer class than my other classes; it's a real long class, we read more....	Describes	Listens
Ob You mean you have more minutes?		Asks clarifying question
B More minutes, yes. We have three periods that have 50 minutes, so I read, probably 3 extra minutes. Where I read 17 minutes, I think, I used to read 14. It's right after lunch so they're really wild or they're real low-keyed, but I think it's a real good class. It's one of my better classes. Today they were tired, they seemed kind of sleepy, a little bit restless, more than usual. You know it comes, day to day. But I think it's a good class; I enjoy that class. This is the only day out of the week that we do work on the overhead. Other days they read more, they do comprehension questions, they talk individually. This is when I talk to the class as a whole. Drawing conclusions is something I've asked on tests that I don't think they've gotten real well.	Describes	Listens
Ob Up until now?		
B Yes. This is the first time they've ever spent a whole lesson on it. I've talked about it some, but not a great deal. So they have had trouble with it before; what can be concluded as far as thinking in abstract terms, that's hard for them to do.	Shares concern	
Ob Right. You haven't formally presented this before...?		Asks clarifying question
B No. This is the first time I've ever formally presented it. I thought it went OK, but I don't think it went extremely well.	Shares concern	
Ob What did you think went well, or what would you do differently the next time?		Asks probing question
B I'd change my exercises around. I didn't like the way I presented my exercises.	Shares concern	
Ob The sequence? You had three different exercises plus the homework assignment. So what do you think you would've done differently?		Asks probing question
B I would like to do what I usually do, but this morning I didn't have a copier....	Describes	Listens
Ob Yes, I know.		
B I had to send my workbooks home.		
Ob Yes.		
B What I would've rather done, and what I usually do is, first present the lecture. And I don't have to go through and read things to them so much. I had to read everything today.... It's been kind of jumbled all day I thought. I don't think the examples were real good.... I was just thinking about the way I presented.... I'm used to going to the workbooks. I think I'm just so used to my schedule, that threw me a little.	Describes Shares impressions	
Ob Well, you didn't seem thrown....		Affirms

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In the last 20 minutes the observer directed conversation around his written comments (shown in Figures 13 and 14). As is evident in the excerpts of the conference relating to classroom management shown in Figure 13, the observer talked most, following the sequence of his written comments. Much of his talk was reconstruction of the lesson and affirmation of how Bethanne taught it. Bethanne listened actively, clarifying and accepting the observer's comments.

Reconstructing how the lesson went, with special emphasis on management, appeared to meet Bethanne's need for feedback. In an interview six weeks after this follow-up conference she commented:

> That [follow-up conference] was helpful . . . . He [the observer] told me everything that was going on in the room and I wasn't aware of how long it took to get [through the various steps of the lesson] and he had it all written down and documented. I really enjoyed having that. I know more about my pace.

She benefited from having an outside observer to collect and to feed back information. Her appreciation for that information was still vivid three and a half months later, as the following excerpt from an interview with the observer indicates:

> Bethanne: Remember the time you [observed] me and gave me feedback?
> Observer: Yes.
> Bethanne: That helped.
> Observer: Can you remember anything specifically about that?
> Bethanne: Just telling me how I do things . . . .
> Observer: So most of what I told you was what was going well?
> Bethanne: Yes.
> Observer: But you weren't aware of it necessarily? Is that right?
> Bethanne: Yes. Exactly.
> Observer: So since that time you've thought back to those comments?
> Bethanne: Yes. Every time I [introduce a new reading] skill I think about it . . . . So that was very helpful.

As Bethanne's comments indicate, helping a first-year teacher reconstruct what happens in her/his classroom can be beneficial. Support teachers can facilitate that reconstruction through careful observations, thoughtful analysis and reorganization of those observations, and

Figure 13

Focusing on Management: Excerpts from a Follow-Up Conference

B = Bethanne, a first year 6th grade reading teacher

Ob = Observer

	Bethanne's Role	Observer's Role
Ob Well, well let me talk to you about the notes I wrote up after observing your class. Let's start with management....	Listens	Focuses agenda
Within 30 seconds after the bell rang they were all seated. I think that's good....		Reconstructs
Throughout the lesson I looked at how you monitored seatwork. During SQUIRT (Sustained Quiet Independent Reading Time) you were reading, which I think is good modelling, but also your eyes did rove.		Reconstructs Affrims
B To see what they were doing.	Clarifies	
Ob There are some classes where that's more necessary than others, but I think it's good to check from time to time. In the three writing exercises...you passed through [the aisles]; it looked like you did that on purpose. You went around, right through the middle.	Listens	Affirms Reconstructs
B I did, to see what they were doing.	Confirms	
Ob Yes. You need to do that kind of checking. I think that's fine. So you didn't stay seated during that time, you were up, moving around. And it wasn't distracting. I think, it's just a message to them, "I expect you to be working, and I'm looking to see if you are." Do you ever, when you do that, see students that maybe try...	Listens	Affirms Asks clarifying question
B When they see me coming then they start really working.	Reconstructs	
Ob Yes. Are there some who have a hard time with the exercises?		Asks clarifying question
B In my "Basics" classes, usually not in my "Regulars." Sometimes, occasionally they do, and I'll stop and talk to them....	Reconstructs	
Ob Yes. OK. Then, the third thing was just how much they stayed on task; I started to keep track of that and then, I decided that they were really on task. I started to make a diagram here, just to see who was doing what. They were just all on task, almost all the time.	Listens	Reconstructs
B Good, good.	Evaluates	
Ob Another things I looked at, in terms of management, were your transitions from one activity to another. Because problems people have in management come up often at the begining of the period, between activities and at the end of the period.	Listens	Reconstructs

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Figure 13 (con't)

Focusing on Management: Excerpts from a Follow-Up Conference

B = Bethanne, a first year 6th grade reading teacher

Ob = Observer

	Bethanne's Role	Observer's Role
B Uh, huh.		
Ob OK, the beginning of the period was fine, the end of the period was fine, so were the transitions.		Affirms
B They were?	Questions	
Ob Yes. They were never more than a minute, and usually less. The one that took the longest and still didn't take long, was when you had to give them the workbook. But, for instance...		Reconstructs
B If it takes too long, they start talking.	Reconstructs	
Ob That's right. In other words, it gets in the way...		Accepts
B If they're not just constantly working, they'll look up and start talking or something, so I try to keep them, and I'll try to talk in between while I'm doing it, so they'll listen.	Reconstructs	
Ob Yes, I notices that. And that is good. That keeps up the momentum, ...and the ss aren't too loud.... The other thing that makes those transitions smooth, for instance, I wrote down the three different transitions you had here. For instance, from SQUIRT to working on spirals where you started to give them the information on drawing conclusions, you said immediately and clearly what they were to do. You said, "get out the spirals, and do this and that." You had your transparency ready so while you were doing that you pulled the projector into place and put your transparency up and you were watching students. So, you're able now, (maybe you were from the beginning), you were able to do two things at once.	Listens	Affirms Reconstructs
B A lot better, yes, much better.	Confirms	
Ob ...So within a minute, they all had their spirals out and you were telling them to find a clean sheet and to number it at the top and they did it. Then, when you were done explaining, and you had given them the points A, B, C in the outline and talked about it a little, you went on to the worksheet. Is that what you did then?		Reconstructs
B Uh, huh.	Confirms	
Ob You had the papers all ready to pass out, so again you didn't loose any momentum by having to go over somewhere and not be able to find them and then come back and you had them all ready to go.		Reconstructs

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Figure 14

Focusing on Presenting New Material:

Excerpts from and Follow-Up Conference

B = Bethanne, a first year sixth-grade reading teacher

(B = Bethanne, Ob = Observer)

	Bethanne's Role	Observer's Role
Ob ..."Then at some point [toward the end of the lesson] you referred back to the general statement. You said, "O.K., how do you draw a conclusion?" Remember?	Asks clarifying Listens	Asks clarifying Reconstructs
B Oh, yes.		
Ob O.K. That was sort of your closure.... So now you're going back and you ask them to tell how to draw conclusions. That's effective. I think you might work that a little bit further, by asking a couple of other kids.		Affirms Suggests change
B Also?		
Ob Yes.		
B O.K.	Accecpts Suggestion	
Ob Just to check to see if they have gotton it. Another thing you might do then, is draw them back again to the transparency or to what they had written down in the notebook.		Suggests change
B And get them to read it again? That's a good idea. Kind of a little review.	Accepts Suggestion	
Ob Yes. Or ask them questions about other points in their outline because...		Suggests change
B Right, you're right. That's a good idea. Get them to go back and read it and ask them a few questions on it.	Accepts Suggestion	
Ob That might help. And it's not as though you need to spend much more time...		

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sensitively conducting the follow-up conference. Follow-up conferences need not be limited to reconstructing what goes on in the classroom. There will be times when the support teacher can appropriately invite the beginner to analyze the lesson in terms of what could be improved. In the excerpt of the conference in Figure 14, the observer invited Bethanne to consider ways of improving how she checked on students' understanding of a new skill or concept. He made a suggestion for a change, leading up to it by reconstructing and affirming what she had done. Bethanne actively listened and accepted the suggestion. This was the only change the observer suggested, not because more improvements were not possible, but because the observer consciously decided to limit the number of suggestions. His decision to suggest change <u>after</u> having affirmed much of the teacher's behaviors was also conscious. Beginning teachers are often unsure of what they are doing well; if support teachers can help them confirm and clarify what they do well, before suggesting improvements, new teachers are more likely to be able to accept suggestions. Bethanne not only accepted the suggestions but reported three and a half months later that she considered them each week when she introduced a new reading skill.

<u>Summary: Observations and Follow-Up conferences</u>

As the case example of Bethanne illustrates, observations and follow-up conferences are time consuming, ranging from two to four hours. Few support teachers will be able to do such observing and conferring without released time. If a first-year teacher and her/his designated support teacher have regular informal and formal contacts, two or three such observations and follow-up conferences per semester may suffice.

The style the observer used with Bethanne would not be appropriate for all first-year teachers, but some combination of directive and nondirective

approaches would probably be appropriate. A more strongly directive approach would be inappropriate, in view of the importance of maintaining a collegial relationship with the first-year teacher. Neither would a critical, strongly evaluative or overtly supervisory approach be conducive to collegiality. By definition, support teachers need to affirm and encourage first-year teachers more than they criticize them, if the relationship is to be perceived as supportive.

The preceding descriptions and examples of observing and offering feedback were given to help experienced teachers think through their role in offering feedback and assistance to first-year teachers. Further training and reading in supervision and observation of teaching would probably also be helpful. As noted earlier, several suggested readings are listed in Appendix A.

Summary

In the past, little specific information has been available to guide experienced teachers who are asked to fulfill support roles with their novice colleagues. This report has described several ways for experienced teachers to assume an assistance role while at the same time, building and maintaining a collegial relationship with beginning teachers. The interaction strategies described are supported by illustrations from the data base of the Model Teacher Induction Project (MTIP), a study of first-year teachers and their support teachers conducted by the Research and Development Center for Teacher Education during the 1984-85 school year. The three types of assistance that experienced teachers can provide that were described in this report include impromptu conversations, prearranged conferences which can have a pre-established or an emergent agenda, and classroom observations. The suggested procedure for the observation

involving a beginning teacher and his/her support teacher was for the pair to determine the focus of the observation in a pre-observation conference, for the observer to take notes during the observation and organize those notes after the observation, and for the two teachers to discuss the observation as colleagues during a follow-up conference. Each of these types of assistance described in this report were utilized in the MTIP and were perceived as helpful by the beginning teachers involved. It is likely that the strategies illustrated here could contribute significantly to the repertoire of assistance techniques used by support teachers in a variety of induction programs.

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Appendix A

Following are three sections from Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development publications that are brief, appropriate beginning readings on supervision:

1) Chapter 3, "Orientations to Supervision," Chapter 4, "Developmental Criteria for Choosing Appropriate Supervisory Orientations," and Chapter 5, "Matching Stages of Teacher Development with Appropriate Supervisory Orientations" in Glickman (1981), Developmental Supervision: Alternative Practices for Helping Teachers Improve Instruction.

2) Part II, "The Many Faces of Supervision" in Sergiovanni (1982), Supervision of Teaching.

3) Chapter 2, "Clinical Supervision" and Chapter 3, "Cooperative Professional Development" in Glatthorn (1984), Differentiated Supervision.

Note: With the exception of Glatthorn's chapter on "Cooperative Professional Development," these sources are written mainly from the perspective of supervisor, not colleagues. Support teachers will most likely find these readings helpful if they translate the author's suggestions to the perspective of an experienced colleague helping a first-year teacher.